



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office of Environmental Affairs

100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900

Boston, MA 02114-2119

Mitt Romney
GOVERNOR

Kerry Healey
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

Robert W. Gollidge, Jr.
SECRETARY

Tel: (617) 626-1000
Fax: (617) 626-1181
<http://www.mass.gov/envir>

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CONTACT: Vanessa Gulati
617-626-1119

GOLLEDGE CONGRATULATES ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS RECIPIENTS OF STATEWIDE PUBLIC SERVICE HONOR

Environmental Affairs Secretary Robert W. Gollidge today announced that two Secretariat employees, William C. Salomaa, Director of Dam Safety with the Department of Conservation and Recreation and Jenmina Ojuka, Environmental Analyst with the Department of Environmental Protection, have been selected to receive the **2006 Manuel Carballo Governor's Award for Excellence in Public Service**. This award is given annually to ten employees who exemplify the highest standards of excellence in public service.

Bill Salomaa is being awarded for being the unflappable DCR point person orchestrating staff and consultants in remedial and preventive actions at a number of dams exhibiting signs of potential collapse during the October 2005 rains. Beginning on October 15th of that year, Bill worked day, night and weekends for 13 straight days to prevent catastrophic failure from occurring at 22 dams located across the Commonwealth, all of which were under severe hydrologic pressure.

Bill's actions and the actions of his staff and consultants were instrumental in preventing the collapse of the Whittendon Pond Dam in downtown Taunton and the Rice City Pond Dam in Uxbridge, both of which would have resulted in immeasurable impacts on the those communities. Additionally, and at the same time, Bill also began the process of implementing the state's new dam regulations, which govern the 1,734 regulated dams in the Commonwealth. The regulations were finalized on November 4, 2005.

Jenmina Ojuka, who works at the Lawrence-based MassDEP Air Assessment Branch, is receiving this award for being a key member of the state scientific team that monitors the air we breathe for fine particle pollution. Most recently, he has served as chief emergency trouble-shooter and repair technician for a network of 32 sophisticated sampling instruments distributed across Massachusetts – from Pittsfield to Boston and Haverhill to Fall River – that need to reliably capture fine particle data at least 75 percent of the time

to ensure that the state is meeting public health-based requirements of the federal Clean Air Act.

In this role, Jenmina is responsible for all equipment failures wherever and whenever they occur. This can mean driving hundreds of miles in a day and, since all MassDEP fine particle monitors are located outdoors and on rooftops, working for hours in extreme temperatures and weather conditions to get samplers back online as quickly as possible. Above and beyond his regular day-to-day work Jenmina shares responsibility with a small team of other MassDEP employees covering shifts on separately sited precision instruments that monitor the air for even the slightest hint of bio-terrorism.

Secretary Gollidge, who attended the award ceremony to congratulate his employees said, "I am proud to have such hardworking, dedicated individuals as part of the EOE team. Both Bill and Jenmina have worked tirelessly to ensure public safety and maintain high environmental standards throughout the Commonwealth."

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